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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/677,059

09/30/2003

Tsutomu Watanabe

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03/29/2004

David L. Fehrman
Morrison & Foerster LLP
35th Floor
555 W. 5th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

EXAMINER

VU, PHUONG T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2841

DATE MAILED: 03/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/677,059

Applicant(s)

WATANABE ET AL.

Examiner

Phuong T. Vu

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4-7 and 9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,8,10 and 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-2, 7, 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Koike et al. (US 6,031,732). Regarding claim 1, the reference discloses an electronic equipment comprising a casing 110 that encloses a spacing and that has a top panel 120 covering the spacing, a circuit board 130 that has a pair of end portions and a major surface extending between the pair of the end portions for mounting electronic parts on the major surface, the circuit board being disposed in the spacing of the casing in opposed relation to the top panel and a stay member 140 that has an elongated shape extending between the pair of the end portions of the circuit board for reinforcing the major surface of the circuit board, the stay member having a bottom coupling portion (bottom edge surface of stay member) disposed in contact with the major surface of the circuit board for coupling with the circuit board, and a top contact portion disposed in contact with a back surface of the top panel for engagement with the casing.

Regarding claim 2, wherein the casing has a pair of side panels (side edges) disposed along opposite ends of the top panel for accommodating the circuit board between the pair of the side panels, and the stay member has a pair

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of end coupling portions at opposite ends of end elongated shape for coupling with the side panels.

Regarding claim 7, the stay member has an elongated top plate extending between the pair of the end portions of the circuit board in opposed relation to the top panel, and a pair of elongated parallel plates folded downward from the elongated top plate such that the elongated top plate and the pair of the elongated parallel plates define a groove having a rectangular cross section for accommodating therein an electronic part.

Regarding claim 9, the top contact portion of the stay member is formed of a series of raised portions arranged along the elongated top plate of the stay member.

3. Claims 1 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Andrews et al. (US 6,122,178). The reference discloses an electronic equipment comprising a casing 42 that encloses a spacing and that has a top panel 40 covering the spacing, a circuit board 12 that has a pair of end portions and a major surface extending between the pair of the end portions for mounting electronic parts on the major surface, the circuit board being disposed in the spacing of the casing in opposed relation to the top panel and a stay member 30a that has an elongated shape extending between the pair of the end portions of the circuit board for reinforcing the major surface of the circuit board, the stay member having a bottom coupling portion 32 disposed in contact with the major surface of the circuit board for coupling with the circuit board, and a top contact

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portion 30a disposed in contact with a back surface of the top panel for engagement with the casing.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koike et al. (US 6,031,732). Regarding claim 4, the circuit board is formed with a guide hole for positioning of the stay member, but the bottom coupling portion of the stay member does not include a guide protrusion for engagement with the guide hole. However, li teaches that it is known in the art to provide a circuit board A with a guide hole D for positioning of a stay member 1 wherein the bottom coupling portion includes a guide protrusion 7 for engagement with the guide hole. It would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made that to provide a guide protrusion for engagement with the guide hole as taught by li for securely and removably attaching a stay member to a circuit board in a quick, efficient manner without the use of tools.

Regarding claim 5, li teaches that the bottom coupling portion of the stay member includes a plurality of guide protrusions, at least one of which has a hook at the end of the guide protrusion, the hook being inserted into the guide hole of the circuit board and being bent so as to fix the stay member to the circuit

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board. It would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made that to provide such a configuration for engagement with the guide hole as taught by li for securely and removably attaching a stay member to a circuit board.

Regarding claim 6, li teaches that the guide protrusion has a step portion at a root portion of the guide protrusion, the step being brought into contact with the major surface of the circuit board when the guide protrusion is engaged with the guide hole.

Allowable Subject Matter


6. Claims 3, 8, 10-11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuong T. Vu whose telephone number is (571) 272-2111. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. & Tues., 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David S. Martin can be reached on (571) 272-2107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


PTVu
Patent Examiner
3/24/04